

Tools of Titans:

HEALTH:

1. Amelia Boone (obstacle course racing):

- a. Beet root
- b. No one owes you anything.
- c. You have to betray their expectation.

2. Christopher Sommar (Gymnastic Strength Training):

- a. “Flexibility” can be passive, whereas “mobility” requires that you can demonstrate strength throughout the entire range of motion, including the end ranges.
- b. Consistency over intensity.
- c. “Diet and train” rather prefer “eat and train.” One is aesthetic, and the other is functional.
- d. Warmup needed.

3. Dominic D’Agostino:

- a. The ketogenic diet, often nicknamed “keto,” is a high-fat diet that mimics fasting physiology. Your brain and body begin to use ketones (derived from stored or ingested fat) for energy instead of blood sugar (glucose)—a state called ketosis. The diet was originally developed to treat epileptic children, but there are many variations, including the Atkins diet. You can achieve ketosis through fasting, diet, exogenous ketones, or a combination.

- b. How do you know when you're in ketosis? The most reliable way is to use a device called the Precision Xtra by Abbott. This can measure both glucose and blood levels of beta- hydroxybutyrate (BHB). Once you reach 0.5 mmol— millimolars, a concentration— you can consider yourself lightly “in ketosis.” I tend to feel increased mental clarity at 1 mmol or higher.
- c. “I like to promote mild to moderate ketosis for health and longevity, which is between 1 to 3 mmol.” TF: These levels help protect DNA from damage, among other benefits.

d. Why consider?

- i. Fat loss and body re-composition.
- ii. Potent anti-cancer effects.
- iii. Better use of oxygen.
- iv. Maintain or increase strength.
- v. Lyme disease.

e. Why fast?

- i. “If you don’t have cancer and you do a therapeutic fast 1 to 3 times per year, you could purge any precancerous cells that may be living in your body.”
- ii. There is also evidence to suggest—skipping the scientific detail—that fasts of 3 days or longer can effectively “reboot” your immune system via stem cell-based regeneration. Dom suggests a 5-day fast 2 to 3 times per year.

- 4. Before I describe the exercise, I shall repeat my usual refrain: Don’t be stupid and hurt yourself, please. Use a very soft surface in case you face plant.
 - a. Do a set of push-ups and end a few repetitions short of failure. Record the number.
 - b. Rest at least 30 minutes.

- c. Do 40 repetitions of the following breathing exercise: Max inhale (raise chest) and "let go" exhale (drop chest sharply). The let-go exhale can be thought of as a short "hah." If you're doing this correctly, after 20 to 30 reps you might feel loose, mild lightheadedness, and a little bit of tingling. The tingling is often felt in the hands first.
 - d. On the last breathing cycle, breathe in completely, exhale completely, then do another set of push-ups. More often than not, people will experience a sharp increase in the max number of push-ups, even though their lungs are empty.
- 5. Wim, surfing king Laird Hamilton (page 92), and Tony Robbins (page 210) all use cold exposure as a tool. It can improve immune function, increase fat loss (partially by increasing levels of the hormone adiponectin), and dramatically elevate mood.
- 6. The slow-carb diet cheat sheet:
 - a. Rule#1: Avoid "white" starchy carbohydrates (or those that can be white)
 - b. Rule#2: Eat the same few meals over and over again, especially for breakfast and lunch.
 - c. Rule#3: Don't drink calories.
 - d. Rule#4: Don't eat fruit.
 - e. Rule#5: Whenever possible, measure your progress in body fat percentage, NOT total pounds.
 - f. Rule#6: Take one day off per week and go nuts.
- 7. When everything else failed, Cossack squats with a kettlebell roughly doubled my ankle mobility, which had a chain of positive effects. Keep your heels on the ground throughout, keep your knees in line with your toes, and keep your hips as low as possible when switching sides. I do 5 to 6 reps per side for 2 to 3 sets, often supersetting with Eric Cressey's "walking Spiderman" warmup.
- 8. I always say that I'll go first. . . . That means if I'm checking out at the store, I'll say hello first. If I'm coming across somebody and make eye contact, I'll smile first. I wish people would experiment

with that in their life a little bit: Be first, because- not all times, but most times-it comes in your favor. The response is pretty amazing. . . .

9. Men, if you wake up and you don't have a boner, there's a problem. Yes or no? One or zero? Boner, no boner?
10. The campfire test - If you can't squat all the way down to the ground with your feet and knees together, then you are missing full hip and ankle range of motion. This is the mechanism causing your hip impingement, plantar fasciitis, torn Achilles, pulled calf, etc. That is the fucking problem, and you should be obsessing about fixing this.
11. Doing light-weight overhead squats with a narrow stance, in combination with Cossack squats (page 87), for 3 months is what helped me get 99% toward passing the "campfire test" above. My left ankle is still sadly bone on bone.
12. 5 Morning rituals that help me to win the day:
 - a. Make your bed.
 - b. Meditate.
 - c. Do 5-10 reps of something.
 - d. Prepare "Titanium Tea" (this name was a joke, but it stuck). Ingredients: Pu-erh aged black tea. Dragon well green tea (or other green tea). Turmeric and ginger shavings (often also Rishi brand)
 - e. Morning pages or 5-Minute Journal.
13. More than 80% of the world-class performers I've interviewed have some form of daily meditation or mindfulness practice.
14. I may be the laziest mindfulness instructor in the world because I tell my students that all they need to commit to is one mindful breath a day. Just one. Breathe in and breathe out

mindfully, and your commitment for the day is fulfilled. Everything else is a bonus.

WEALTH:

15. “If you set your goals ridiculously high and it’s a failure, you will fail above everyone else’s success.”
—James Cameron

16. **CHRIS SACCA:**

- a. **Which of those did you assign yourself, and which of those are you doing to please someone else? Your inbox is a to-do list to which anyone in the world can add an action item.** I needed to get out of my inbox and back to my own to-do list.”
- b. Go to as many higher-level meetings as possible.
- c. Experience often deeply embeds the assumptions that need to be questioned in the first place. When you have a lot of experience with something, you don’t notice the things that are new about it. You don’t notice the idiosyncrasies that need to be tweaked. You don’t notice where the gaps are, what’s missing, or what’s not really working.” Chris is incredibly smart about asking the “dumb” questions hiding in plain sight.
- d. Be your unapologetically weird self.

17. **MARC ANDREESSEN:**

- a. “Be so good they can’t ignore you.”
- b. “Smart people should make things.”

- c. “Life can be much broader, once you discover one simple fact, and that is that everything around you that you call ‘life’ was made up by people that were no smarter than you. And you can change it, you can influence it, you can build your own things that other people can use. Once you learn that, you’ll never be the same again.” – **Steve Jobs.**
- d. Value investing.
- e. “My goal is not to fail fast. My goal is to succeed over the long run. They are not the same thing.”
- f. “To do original work: It’s not necessary to know something nobody else knows. It is necessary to believe something few other people believe.”
- g. “Andy Grove had the answer: For every metric, there should be another ‘paired’ metric that addresses adverse consequences of the first metric.”
- h. “Show me an incumbent bigco failing to adapt to change, I’ll show you top execs paid huge cash compensation for quarterly and annual goals.”
- i. “Every billionaire suffers from the same problem. Nobody around them ever says, ‘Hey, that stupid idea you just had is really stupid.’”
- j. ““Far more money has been lost by investors trying to anticipate corrections, than has been lost in corrections themselves.”—Peter Lynch”

18. **ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER :**

- a. “I WASN’T THERE TO COMPETE. I WAS THERE TO WIN.” “My confidence came from my vision. . . . **I am a big believer that if you have a very clear vision of where you want to go, then the rest of it is much easier.** “
- b. “In negotiation, he who cares the least wins.” He could ignore bit parts because he had cash flow from his real estate investments. On a related note, Arnold makes films or stars

in them, but he doesn't invest in them. He's offset the potential volatility of his own career by investing primarily in real estate. I've taken a similar approach to date, focusing on two ends of the spectrum: early-stage tech startups (extremely volatile) and real estate that I'm happy to hold forever, if need be.

- c. How can I carve myself out a niche that only I have?
- d. Meditations.
- e. Who do you think of when you hear the word "successful"?
→ **"Cincinnatus."**

19. DEREK SIVERS:

- a. "IF [MORE] INFORMATION WAS THE ANSWER, THEN WE'D ALL BE BILLIONAIRES WITH PERFECT ABS."
 - i. It's not what you know, it's what you do consistently.
- b. "HOW TO THRIVE IN AN UNKNOWABLE FUTURE? CHOOSE THE PLAN WITH THE MOST OPTIONS. THE BEST PLAN IS THE ONE THAT LETS YOU CHANGE YOUR PLANS."
- c. For people starting out – say yes for opportunity.
- d. "Why?" three times. This is true when questioning his own motives, or when tackling big projects.
- e. The standard pace is for chumps.
- f. "So, my advice to my 30-year-old self is, don't be a donkey. You can do everything you want to do. You just need foresight and patience."

- g. “Busy” == Out of Control. Lack of time is lack of priorities.
- h. I think of all of this maximization—getting the maximum dollar out of everything, the maximum out of every second, the maximum out of every minute—you don’t need to stress about any of this stuff. Honestly, that’s been my approach ever since. I do things, but I stop before anything gets stressful. . . .
- i. When you’re thinking of how to make your business bigger, it’s tempting to try to think all the big thoughts, the world-changing, massive-action plans.

20. Tony Robbins:

- a. **Life is always happening *for* us, not *to* us.** It’s our job to find out where the benefit is. If we do, life is magnificent.”
- b. “‘Stressed’ is the achiever word for ‘fear.’”
- c. “Losers react, leaders anticipate.”
- d. “Mastery doesn’t come from an infographic. What you *know* doesn’t mean shit. What do you *do* consistently?”
- e. Jim Rohn famously said, “If you let your learning lead to knowledge, you become a fool. If you let your learning lead to action, you become wealthy.”
- f. Tony sometimes phrases this as, “The quality of your life is the quality of your questions.” Questions determine your focus. Most people—and I’m certainly guilty of this at times—spend their lives focusing on negativity (e.g., “How could he say that to me?!”) and therefore the wrong priorities.
- g. The reason you’re suffering is you’re focused on yourself. It’s still about them. . . . Suffering comes from three thought patterns: loss, less, never.”

21. Casey Neistat:

- a. “If you would not be forgotten as soon as you are dead and rotten, either write things worth reading, or do things worth writing.”
- b. “You realize that you will never be the best-looking person in the room. You’ll never be the smartest person in the room. You’ll never be the most educated, the most well-versed. You can never compete on those levels. But what you can always compete on, the true egalitarian aspect to success, is hard work. You can always work harder than the next guy.”
- c. **“What is the ultimate quantification of success? For me, it’s not how much time you spend doing what you love. It’s how little time you spend doing what you hate.**
- d. WHAT’S THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS THING YOU CAN DO?
- e. FOLLOW WHAT ANGERS YOU

22. Red Hoffman:

- a. One of my all-time favorite quotes from dear Ludwig is: “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.” (*Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt.*)
- b. “I have come to learn that part of the business strategy is to **solve the simplest, easiest, and most valuable problem.** And actually, in fact, **part of doing strategy is to solve the easiest problem,** so part of the reason why you work on software and bits is that atoms [physical products] are actually very difficult.”
- c. “Never go to sleep without a request to your subconscious.”—Thomas Edison
- d. ‘In order to move fast, I expect you’ll make some foot faults. I’m okay with an error rate of 10 to 20%—times when I would have made a different decision in a given situation—if it means you can move fast.’
- e. On Vetting the Best Employees or Partners

- i. “How do you know if you have A-players on your project team? You know it if they don’t just accept the strategy you hand them. They should suggest modifications to the plan based on their closeness to the details.”
- f. ‘There needs to be one decisive reason, and then the worthiness of the trip needs to be measured against that one reason. If I go, then we can backfill into the schedule all the other secondary activities. But if I go for a blended reason, I’ll almost surely come back and feel like it was a waste of time.’ ”

23. Peter Thiel:

- a. “If I believed this, how would it affect my decisions in the next week? Over the next 6 to 12 months?”
- b. “If you go back 20 or 25 years, I wish I would have known that there was no need to wait. I went to college. I went to law school. I worked in law and banking, though not for terribly long. But not until I started PayPal did I fully realize that you don’t have to wait to start something. So if you’re planning to do something with your life, if you have a 10-year plan of how to get there, you should ask: Why can’t you do this in 6 months? Sometimes, you have to actually go through the complex, 10- year trajectory. But it’s at least worth asking whether that’s the story you’re telling yourself, or whether that’s the reality.”
- c. That you are working on a unique problem that people are not solving elsewhere.

d. Question:

- i. The Monopoly Question: Are you starting with a big share of a small market?
- ii. The Secret Question: Have you identified a unique opportunity that others don't see?
- iii. The Distribution Question: Do you have a way to not just create but deliver your product?

24. Seth Godin:

- a. So the goal isn't to get good ideas; the goal is to get bad ideas. Because once you get enough bad ideas, then some good ones have to show up."
- b. TO CREATE SOMETHING GREAT (OR EVENTUALLY HUGE), START EXTREMELY SMALL
- c. So we cannot out-obedience the competition. Therefore, we have to out-lead or out-solve the other people. . . .

25. James Altucher:

- a. If you can't get 10 good ideas, get 20 ideas.

Samples:

- 10 old ideas I can make new
- 10 ridiculous things I would invent (e.g., the smart toilet)
- 10 books I can write (The Choose Yourself Guide to an Alternative Education, etc). 10 business ideas for Google/Amazon/Twitter/etc.
- 10 people I can send ideas to
- 10 podcast ideas or videos I can shoot (e.g., Lunch with James, a video podcast where I just have
- lunch with people over Skype and we chat)
- 10 industries where I can remove the middleman
- 10 things I disagree with that everyone else assumes is religion (college, home ownership, voting, doctors, etc.)

- 10 ways to take old posts of mine and make books out of them
- 10 people I want to be friends with (then figure out the first step to contact them)
- 10 things I learned yesterday
- 10 things I can do differently today 10 ways I can save time
- 10 things I learned from X, where X is someone I've recently spoken with or read a book by or about. I've written posts on this about the Beatles, Mick Jagger, Steve Jobs, Charles Bukowski, the Dalai Lama, Superman, Freakonomics, etc.
- 10 things I'm interested in getting better at (and then 10 ways I can get better at each one)
- 10 things I was interested in as a kid that might be fun to explore now (Like, maybe I can write that "Son of Dr. Strange" comic I've always been planning. And now I need 10 plot ideas.)
- 10 ways I might try to solve a problem I have This has saved me with the IRS countless times. Unfortunately, the Department of Motor Vehicles is impervious to my superpowers.

26. Scott Adams:

- a. six elements of humor: naughty, clever, cute, bizarre, mean, and recognizable. You have to have at least two dimensions to succeed.
- b. Fundamentally, "systems" could be thought of as asking yourself, "What persistent skills or relationships can I develop?" versus "What short-term goal can I achieve?" The former has a potent snowball effect, while the latter is a binary pass/fail with no consolation prize. Scott writes about this extensively in his book *How to Fail at Almost Everything and Still Win Big: Kind of the Story of My Life*.

- c. “The model is: Your brain can’t find good contact, not directly in an intellectual sense. Obviously, the brain’s involved, but what I mean is that as I’m thinking of these ideas and they’re flowing through my head, I’m monitoring my body; I’m not monitoring my mind. And when my body changes, I have something that other people are going to care about, too.”

THE LOGIC OF THE DOUBLE OR TRIPLE THREAT

- d. If you want an average, successful life, it doesn’t take much planning. Just stay out of trouble, go to school, and apply for jobs you might like. But if you want something extraordinary, you have two paths: 1) Become the best at one specific thing. 2) Become very good (top 25%) at two or more things.
- e. Capitalism rewards things that are both rare and valuable. You make yourself rare by combining two or more “pretty goods” until no one else has your mix. . . . At least one of the skills in your mixture should involve **communication, either written or verbal**. And it could be as simple as learning how to **sell** more effectively than 75% of the world. That’s one. Now add to that whatever your **passion** is, and you have two, because that’s the thing you’ll easily put enough energy into to reach the top 25%. If you have an aptitude for a third skill, perhaps **business or public speaking**, develop that too.
- f. It sounds like generic advice, but you’d be hard-pressed to find any successful person who didn’t have about three skills in the top 25%.

27. Key Angel Investing Rules:

- a. **Follow Your Rules:**

- i. Stick to intelligent, pre-defined rules to avoid impulsive decisions.

b. Startup Criteria:

- i. Founders: Prefer technical founders (single technical founder or two technical co-founders ideal).
- ii. Product Fit: Be eager to use the product; focus on consumer-facing or small-business products/services.

c. Traction:

- i. More than 100K active users, or
- ii. Serial founder(s) with past exits, or
- iii. Over 10K paying customers.
- iv. Growth: Must have >10% month-over-month activity growth.
- v. Cap Table: Clean, with minimal/no previous financing or bridge rounds.
- vi. Geography: U.S.-based or willing to create a U.S.-based investable entity.
- vii. Founders' Backgrounds: Prefer founders who've worked in "crappy service jobs" for groundedness.

d. Investment Rules:

- i. Use the "two-thirds rule": Each startup should have the potential to return at least two-thirds of your fund.
- ii. Exit scenarios: If a startup exits at 3x valuation, it should provide significant returns relative to your time invested.
- iii. Move gradually from Investor ,Üí Investor/Advisor ,Üí Advisor to maximize equity while reducing capital investment.

e. Corrections After Early Mistakes:

- i. Start with small investments in promising startups, particularly in accelerator networks like Y Combinator.

- ii. Build reputation as a value-adding advisor, offering help for minimal equity to establish credibility.
- iii. Negotiate for advising equity over time instead of relying solely on cash investments.

f. Angel Investing Challenges:

- i. Most startups will fail, requiring successes to compensate for losses.
- ii. Investments are illiquid and may take 7-10 years to pay off.

g. Personal Graduate Program Approach:

- i. Design self-guided “MBA-style” programs to focus on practical learning:
- ii. Creative Writing: Join a writing group and dedicate time weekly.
- iii. Political Science: Volunteer/work on campaigns and follow relevant reading lists.
- iv. Entrepreneurship: Spend ~\$2,500/month testing income ideas.
- v. Commit to **action over theory**: Take real-world risks and build hands-on experience.

28. The Law of Category:

- a. If you can’t be first in a category, set up a new category you can be first in.
- b. When you launch a new product, the first question to ask yourself is not “How is this new product better than the competition?” but “First what?” In other words, what category is this new product first in?
- c. When you’re the first in a new category, promote the category. In essence, you have no competition. DEC told its prospects why they ought to buy a minicomputer, not a DEC minicomputer. In the early days, Hertz sold rent-a-car

service. Coca-Cola sold refreshment. Marketing programs of both companies were more effective back then.

- d. On going premium from day one. when I was able to start to monetize my craft, I did so at a very high price point. Little note: If someone ever says ‘yes’ that quickly, you didn’t ask for enough.”

29. 1000 True Fans:

- a. “Success” need not be complicated. Just start with making 1,000 people extremely, extremely happy.
- b. Two rules:
 - i. First, you have to create enough each year that you can earn, on average, \$100 profit from each true fan.
 - ii. Second, you must have a direct relationship with your fans. That is, they must pay you directly.
 - iii. True fans are not only the direct source of your income, but also your chief marketing force for the ordinary fans.

30. How to raise \$100k in 10 days?

- a. General Crowdfunding Benefits:
 - i. Crowdfunding platforms like Kickstarter and Indiegogo mitigate risk by allowing creators to test ideas before manufacturing.
 - ii. Enables creators to gauge market interest without upfront investment in inventory.
- b. Preparation Insights:
 - i. Interview top Kickstarter creators to gather insights.
 - ii. Use systematic, data-driven methods to plan campaigns.
 - iii. Leverage virtual assistants (VAs) to save time and maximize efficiency.

31. But in fact, what artists do is they learn to see.”

32. **Key Strategies:**

a. Traffic Generation (MED - Minimum Effective Dose):

i. Focus traffic on two main sources:

1. Coverage on relevant blogs.
2. Buzz via Facebook, Twitter, and email.
3. Bit.ly trick: Add "+" to a shortened URL to view referral stats. Analyze competitors' traffic sources this way.

b. Finding Relevant Bloggers:

i. Google Images Hack:

1. Drag and drop images from similar Kickstarter projects into Google Images to find blogs/sites that covered them.

ii. Use these results to create a media list:

1. Fields: Blog name, URL, writer's name, relevant post links.
2. Expand using SimilarSites.com.

iii. Traffic Research:

1. Use SimilarWeb or Alexa to analyze blog traffic metrics.

iv. Leverage Relationships:

1. Facebook and LinkedIn:
 - a. Search for mutual friends who can introduce you to bloggers in your media list.
2. Importance of Relationships:

- a. Cold pitches have low success rates (<1%).
- b. Warm introductions significantly increase success (50%).

v. Essential Tools:

- 1. TextExpander: Save and reuse text snippets to save time in outreach.
- 2. Boomerang (Gmail plugin): Schedule emails for optimized launch timing.

33. TRACY DINUNZIO:

- a. Stephen Hawking actually has the best quote on this and also [a] legitimate story. . . . [He] has the right to complain probably more than anybody. He says that, ‘When you complain, nobody wants to help you,’ and it’s the simplest thing and so plainly spoken. Only he could really say that brutal, honest truth, but it’s true, right? If you spend your time focusing on the things that are wrong, and that’s what you express and project to people you know, you don’t become a source of growth for people, you become a source of destruction for people. That draws more destructiveness.

34. PHIL LIBIN:

- a. “His hypothesis is that everything breaks at roughly these points of 3 and 10 [multiples of 3 and powers of 10].

35. CHIRS YOUNG:

- a. the job I was going to do hadn’t even been invented yet. . . . The interesting jobs are the ones that you make up.
- b. **“IF YOU HAD \$100 MILLION, WHAT WOULD YOU BUILD THAT WOULD HAVE NO VALUE TO OTHERS IN COPYING?”**

- i. When Intel goes to build a new chip fabricator, it's billions and billions of dollars, and there's no value in anybody else copying it, because not only do they have to spend even more billions to catch up, but they have to spend more billions to learn everything else Intel knows about this, and then they have to be 10 times better for anyone to want to switch. So it's just a waste of everyone's time [to attempt copying]."
- ii. One of the top 10 venture capitalists I know uses a variant of this litmus test as his measurement of "disruptive": For each \$1 of revenue you generate, can you cost an incumbent \$5 to \$10? If so, he'll invest. As a related aside, one of my favorite business-related PDFs floating around the Internet is "Valve: Handbook for New Employees" from Gabe's company. As Chris put it: "It's the only HR document you will ever knowingly want to read."

36. Diamond John:

- a. "If you go out there and start making noise and making sales, people will find you. Sales cure all. You can talk about how great your business plan is and how well you are going to do. You can make up your own opinions, but you cannot make up your own facts. Sales cure all."
- b. "Five days a week, I read my goals before I go to sleep and when I wake up. There are 10 goals around health, family, business, etc., with expiration dates, and I update them every 6 months."
- c. "My parents always taught me that my day job would never make me rich. It'd be my homework."
- d. "I don't care if you're my brother—if we go play football, I'm gonna try to crack your head open. It doesn't mean that I don't love you. It doesn't mean that I don't respect you."

37. The Canvas Strategy:

- a. Find canvases for other people to paint on. Be an antebulo. Clear the path for the people above you and you will eventually create a path for yourself.
- b. When you are just starting out, we can be sure of a few fundamental realities: 1) You're not nearly as good or as important as you think you are; 2) you have an attitude that needs to be readjusted; 3) most of what you think you know or most of what you learned in books or in school is out of date or wrong.
- c. Attach yourself to people and organizations who are already successful, subsume your identity into theirs, and move both forward simultaneously. It's certainly more glamorous to pursue your own glory—though hardly as effective. Obeisance is the way forward.
- d. “He was like a sponge, taking it all in, listening to everything,” one coach said. “You gave him an assignment and he disappeared into a room and you didn't see him again until it was done, and then he wanted to do more,” said another. As you can guess, Belichick started getting paid very soon.
- e. If he wanted to give his coach feedback or question a decision, he needed to do it in private and self-effacingly so as not to offend his superior. He learned how to be a rising star without threatening or alienating anyone. In other words, he had mastered the canvas strategy.
- f. Greatness comes from humble beginnings; it comes from grunt work. It means you're the least important person in the room—until you change that with results.

g. “Say little, do much.” Be *lesser*, do *more*. Imagine if for every person you met, you thought of some way to help them, something you could do for them? And you looked at it in a way that entirely benefited them and not you? The cumulative effect this would have over time would be profound: You’d learn a great deal by solving diverse problems. You’d develop a reputation for being indispensable. You’d have countless new relationships. You’d have an enormous bank of favors to call upon down the road. That’s what the canvas strategy is about—helping yourself by helping others.

h. Focus on Helping Others:

- i. Prioritize helping others succeed, even at the expense of receiving credit yourself.
- ii. Trade short-term gratification for long-term benefits and growth.

i. Forget Credit:

- i. Be genuinely glad when others receive credit; that was your intention.
- ii. Let others take immediate recognition while you benefit from deferred, compounded rewards.

j. Resist Ego and Bitterness:

- i. Avoid feelings of bitterness, envy, or resentment toward those with more status or resources.
- ii. Overcome the egotistical urge to always prioritize your work and accomplishments.

k. Implementing the Strategy:

- i. Support Others: Proactively offer ideas to your boss or colleagues to help them shine.
- ii. Network Building: Connect people with shared interests or complementary skills to foster collaboration.

1. Take Initiative: Do tasks others avoid, such as addressing inefficiencies or solving overlooked problems.

- iii. Be Generous: Share your ideas freely and focus on enabling others' creativity and productivity.

I. Scalable and Timeless:

- i. The strategy works in any phase of life—before a job, while working, or when starting anew.
- ii. It's ageless; both young and old can adopt and benefit from it.

m. Long-Term Impact:

- i. Helps build valuable relationships and enhances personal development.
- ii. Leads to controlling the direction of progress by being the one who clears the path.

n. Adopt as a Permanent Mindset:

- i. Let it become a natural part of your approach, even when you lead your own projects.
- ii. Allow others to use this strategy to support you while you focus on helping those above or around you.

o. Key Insight:

- i. The one who clears the path (like shaping a canvas) indirectly influences the final outcome and direction.

38. NEIL STRAUSS:

- a. The biggest mistake you can make is to accept the norms of your time.' Not accepting norms is where you innovate, whether it's with technology, with books, with anything. So, not accepting the norm is the secret to really big success and changing the world."
39. "Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming 'Wow! What a Ride!'" — Hunter S.
40. 'killing your darlings'—the plot points and characters that detract from a novel. Sometimes you need to stop doing things you love in order to nurture the one thing that matters most."
41. Truth is, young creative minds don't need more ideas, they need to take more responsibility with the ideas they've already got."

42. PETER DIAMANDIS:

- a. I talk to CEOs all the time, and I say, 'Listen, the day before something is truly a breakthrough, it's a crazy idea. If it wasn't a crazy idea, it's not a breakthrough; it's an incremental improvement. So where inside of your companies are you trying crazy ideas?'
- b. "WHEN 99% OF PEOPLE DOUBT YOU, YOU'RE EITHER GRAVELY WRONG OR ABOUT TO MAKE HISTORY."

- c. Are you working on something that can change the world? Yes or no? The answer for 99.99999% of people is 'no.' I think we need to be training people on how to change the world."
 - d. how you announce a big bold idea to the world really matters. . . . We all have a line of credibility around ideas. We judge them constantly. "If you announce it below the line of credibility, people dismiss it out of hand, and then we have this line of supercredibility. If you announce it above the line of supercredibility, people say, 'Wow, when's it going to happen? How can I be involved?'
43. Peter has a set of rules that guide his life. His 28 Peter's Laws have been collected over decades. Here are some of my favorites:
- a. Law 2: When given a choice . . . take both.
 - b. Law 3: Multiple projects lead to multiple successes.
 - c. Law 6: When forced to compromise, ask for more.
 - d. Law 7: If you can't win, change the rules.
 - e. Law 8: If you can't change the rules, then ignore them.
 - f. Law 11: "No" simply means begin again at one level higher.
 - g. Law 13: When in doubt: THINK.
 - h. Law 16: The faster you move, the slower time passes, the longer you live.
 - i. Law 17: The best way to predict the future is to create it yourself. (adopted from Alan Kay) Law 19: You get what you incentivize.
 - j. Law 22: The day before something is a breakthrough, it's a crazy idea.
 - k. Law 26: If you can't measure it, you can't improve it.

44. SOPHIA AMORUSO:

- a. I like to make promises that I'm not sure I can keep and then figure out how to keep them.
- b. **"A day that ends well is one that started with exercise.**
That's for sure."

45. B.J NOVAK:

- a. A good comedy operates the exact same way a good mystery operates. [Which is] the punchline is something that is right in front of your face the whole time and you never would have put your finger on it.
- b. "But I'm making so much money," or "But I'm making good money" is a warning sign that you're probably not on the right track or, at least, that you shouldn't stay there for long. Money can always be regenerated. Time and reputation cannot.
- c. GET THE LONG-TERM GOAL ON THE CALENDAR BEFORE THE SHORT-TERM PAIN HITS.
- d. Make commitments in a high-energy state so that you can't back out when you're in a low-energy state.
- e. For Steve, comedy was a by-product of authenticity.
- f. B.J. typically spends the first few hours of his day "powering up" and getting in a good mood, until he gets an idea he's excited about, or until he has so much self-loathing and caffeine that he has to do something about it.

46. Life favors the specific ask and punishes the vague wish.

WISE:

47. JOCKO WILLINK:

- a. “TWO IS ONE AND ONE IS NONE.” “Better to have, and not need, than to need, and not have.” Where can you eliminate “single points of failure” in your life or business? Jocko adds, “And don’t just have backup gear—have a backup plan to handle likely contingencies.”
- b. . I think if you shield yourself from the darkness, you’ll not appreciate—and fully understand—the beauty of life.”
- c. “TAKE EXTREME OWNERSHIP OF YOUR WORLD”

48. SEBASTIAN JUNGER:

- a. If you don’t give young men a good and useful group to belong to, they will create a bad group to belong to. But one way or another, they’re going to create a group, and they’re going to find something, an adversary, where they can demonstrate their prowess and their unity.”
- b. THE CALMING EFFECT OF ACTING INSTEAD OF WAITING
 - i. “The special forces guys were the opposite [of those in the non-elite divisions]. As soon as they heard they were about to experience an overwhelming attack, their cortisol levels dropped. They got super calm. The reason their cortisol levels dropped was because it was stressful for them to wait for the unknown, but as soon as they knew they were going to be attacked, they had a plan of action. They started filling sandbags. They started cleaning their rifles. They started stockpiling their ammo, getting the plasma bags ready, whatever

they do before an attack. All of that busyness gave them a sense of mastery and control that actually made them feel less anxious than just waiting around on an average day in a dangerous place.”(326)

49. **SAMY KAMKAR:**

a. **Tools of hacker**

50. **STANMCCHRYSTAL:**

- a. sometimes a plan can end up being a string of miracles, and that’s not a real solid plan. So red teaming is: You take people who aren’t wedded to the plan and [ask them,] ‘How would you disrupt this plan or how would you defeat this plan?’ If you have a very thoughtful red team, you’ll produce stunning results.”
- b. you should have a running list of three people that you’re always watching: someone senior to you that you want to emulate, a peer who you think is better at the job than you are and who you respect, and someone subordinate who’s doing the job you did—one, two, or three years ago—better than you did it. If you just have those three individuals that you’re constantly measuring yourself off of, and you’re constantly learning from them, you’re going to be exponentially better than you are.”
- c. Around age 35 to 40, as you get up to battalion level, which is about 600 people, suddenly, you’re going to have to lead it a different way, and what you’re really going to have to do is develop people. The advice I’d give to anyone young is it’s really about developing people who are going to do the work. Unless you are going to go do the task yourself, then the development time you spend on the people who are going to do that task, whether they are going to lead people doing it or whether they are actually going to do it, every

minute you spend on that is leveraged, is exponential return.”

51. SHAY CARL:

- a. You can tell the true character of a man by how his dog and his kids react to him.
- b. What would I probably tell myself as an older version of myself? That is the wisdom that I think you found in that exercise. . . . [If you do this exercise and then start living the answers,] I think you’re going to grow exponentially faster than you would have otherwise.”

52. DICKENS PROCESS:

- a. I recall answering and visualizing variations of:
 - i. What has each belief cost you in the past, and what has it cost people you’ve loved in the past? What have you lost because of this belief? See it, hear it, feel it.
 - ii. What is each costing you and people you care about in the present? See it, hear it, feel it.
 - iii. What will each cost you and people you care about 1, 3, 5, and 10 years from now? See it, hear it, feel it.

53. KEVIN COSTNER:

- a. “When I articulated that I didn’t care anymore about what anybody thought about what I did except me, **all the weight of the world came off my shoulders, and everything became possible. It shifted to everybody else [being] worried. Now they’re worried. But everything for me, it shifted to a place where I felt free.**”
- b. Being an entrepreneur is being willing to do a job that nobody else wants to do, [in order] to be able to live the rest of your life doing whatever you want to do.

- c. I usually know when I'm on to something when I'm a little bit afraid of it. I go: 'Wow, I could mess this up.'

54. SAM HARRIS:

- a. 'Mindfulness' is just that quality of mind which allows you to pay attention to sights and sounds and sensations, and even thoughts themselves, without being lost in thought and without grasping at what is pleasant and pushing what is unpleasant away. . . .
- b. What is "vipassana" meditation?
"It's simply a method of paying exquisitely close and nonjudgmental attention to whatever you're experiencing anyway."
- c. Using the sky for meditation.

55. This exercise is a guide to overcoming fear, procrastination, and doubt when considering significant life changes. It emphasizes defining, addressing, and acting upon challenges to avoid the long-term costs of inaction. Here's a summary of the key steps:

- a. **Define Your Worst-Case Scenario:** Write down your fears and the worst outcomes in vivid detail. Assess their likelihood and permanence. Most worst-case scenarios are less severe than we imagine.
- b. **Plan for Damage Control:** Identify practical steps to recover if things go wrong. Often, recovery is easier than anticipated.
- c. **Visualize Positive Outcomes:** Focus on the probable benefits of taking action, both internal (confidence, self-esteem) and external (success, opportunities). Evaluate the likelihood of achieving good results—many others have succeeded despite challenges.
- d. **Prepare for Financial Shifts:** If facing job loss or a career pivot, consider how you'd stabilize finances and reenter

your field if necessary. This planning reduces fear of change.

- e. **Face Your Fears:** Identify what you're avoiding out of fear—these are often the most necessary actions. Embrace discomfort daily to build resilience and courage.
- f. **Evaluate the Cost of Inaction:** Consider the emotional, physical, and financial toll of postponing action. Imagine the regret of staying on an unfulfilling path for years.
- g. **Act Now:** Recognize that fear of the unknown holds most people back. Missteps are rarely irreparable, and the habit of taking action leads to growth and fulfillment.

56. KEVIN KELLY:

a. **SIT, SIT. WALK, WALK. DON'T WOBBLE.**

i. “The Zen mantra is ‘Sit, sit. Walk, walk. Don’t wobble.’ . . . It’s this idea that when I’m with a person, that’s total priority. Anything else is multitasking. No, no, no, no. The people-to-people, person-to- person trumps anything else. I have given my dedication to this. If I go to a play or a movie, I am at the movie. I am not anywhere else. It’s 100%—I am going to listen. If I go to a conference, I am going to go to the conference.”

ii. TF: This is very similar to Derek Sivers’s (page 184) “Don’t be a donkey” rule. In a world of distraction, single-tasking is a superpower.

iii. **THE DEATH COUNTDOWN CLOCK:**

1. The death countdown clock is a motivational tool inspired by actuarial life expectancy, showing how many days remain to live. It serves as a daily reminder to prioritize meaningful activities and live intentionally, embracing the

concept of memento mori—remembering mortality to focus on life.

2. The idea includes organizing life into 5-year increments, as significant projects often span about five years. Acknowledging the limited number of such periods helps concentrate on what truly matters. Successful individuals use similar tools, like spreadsheets, to align their goals with their priorities, fostering purposeful and focused living.

iv. “YOU DON’T WANT ‘PREMATURE OPTIMIZATION’”

1. “I really recommend slack. ‘Productive’ is for your middle ages. When you’re young, you want to be prolific and make and do things, but you don’t want to measure them in terms of productivity. You want to measure them in terms of extreme performance, you want to measure them in extreme satisfaction.”

57. WHITNEY CUMMINGS:

- a. If something offends you, look inward. . . . That’s a sign that there’s something there.
- b. **Perfectionism leads to procrastination, which leads to paralysis.**
- c. **And in order for art to imitate life, you have to have a life.”**
 - i. **Art Imitates Life:**
 1. Art often reflects or mirrors the human experience—emotions, relationships, struggles, joys, and the world around us.

2. For art to feel genuine and relatable, it needs to be grounded in the realities of life.

ii. "You Have to Have a Life":

1. To create art that resonates, you must engage with life fully—exploring, learning, and experiencing.
2. A rich and diverse life provides the inspiration, perspective, and depth needed to create art that speaks to others.

iii. The Message:

1. If you spend all your time isolated or disconnected from the world, your art might lack authenticity and relevance.
2. Living fully—forming relationships, traveling, facing challenges, and appreciating beauty—gives you the raw material for creativity.

58. ALIAN DE BOTTON:

- a. DON'T ATTRIBUTE TO MALICE THAT WHICH CAN BE EXPLAINED OTHERWISE
 - i. "Wasn't it Bill Clinton who said that when dealing with anyone who's upset, he always asks, 'Has this person slept? Have they eaten? Is somebody else bugging them?' He goes through this simple checklist. . . . When we're handling babies and the baby is kicking and crying, we almost never once say, 'That baby's out to get me' or 'She's got evil intentions.'"
- b. "The more you know what you really want, and where you're really going, the more what everybody else is doing starts to diminish. The moments when your own path is at

its most ambiguous, [that's when] the voices of others, the distracting chaos in which we live, the social media static start to loom large and become very threatening.

c. DON'T EXPECT OTHERS TO UNDERSTAND YOU:

- i. "To blame someone for not understanding you fully is deeply unfair because, first of all, we don't understand ourselves, and even if we do understand ourselves, we have such a hard time communicating ourselves to other people. Therefore, to be furious and enraged and bitter that people don't get all of who we are is a really a cruel piece of immaturity."

d. Advice to your 30-year-old self?

"I would have said, 'Appreciate what's good about this moment. Don't always think that you're on a permanent journey. Stop and enjoy the view.' . . . I always had this assumption that if you appreciate the moment, you're weakening your resolve to improve your circumstances. That's not true, but I think when you're young, it's sort of associated with that. . . . I had people around me who'd say things like, 'Oh, a flower, nice.' A little part of me was thinking, 'You absolute loser. You've taken time to appreciate a flower? Do you not have bigger plans? I mean, this the limit of your ambition?' and when life's knocked you around a bit and when you've seen a few things, and time has happened and you've got some years under your belt, you start to think more highly of modest things like flowers and a pretty sky, or just a morning where nothing's wrong and everyone's been pretty nice to everyone else. . . . Fortune can do anything with us. We are very fragile creatures. You only need to tap us or hit us in slightly the wrong place. . . . You only have to push us a little bit, and we crack very easily, whether that's the pressure of disgrace or physical illness, financial pressure, etc. It doesn't take very much. So, we do have to appreciate every day that goes by without a major disaster."

59. CAL FUSSMAN:

- a. AIM FOR THE HEART, NOT THE HEAD:
 - i. “Lesson number one, when people ask me what [interviewing] tips would I give, is aim for the heart, not the head. Once you get the heart, you can go to the head. Once you get the heart and the head, then you’ll have a pathway to the soul.”
- b. A QUESTION CAL SUGGESTS ASKING PEOPLE MORE OFTEN:
 - i. “What are some of the choices you’ve made that made you who you are?”
- c. “THE GOOD SHIT STICKS”

60. JOSHUA SKENES:

- a. **Let’s just completely empty our cup here and really think about what is valuable to me now. What’s honest. What’s sincere about what we’re doing?**
- b. LEARN FROM THE GREATS, NOT YOUR COMPETITION
 - i. “Going to museums and looking at great art can help you write better songs. Reading great novels . . . seeing a great movie . . . reading poetry. . . . The only way to use the inspiration of other artists is if you submerge yourself in the greatest works of all time. . . If you listen to the greatest songs ever made, that would be a better way to work through [finding] your own voice today, [rather] than listening to what’s on the radio now and thinking.

61. WRITING PROMPTS FROM CHERYL STRAYED:

- a. Chances are that you'll surprise yourself.
- b. Write about a time when you realized you were mistaken.
- c. Write about a lesson you learned the hard way.
- d. Write about a time you were inappropriately dressed for the occasion. Write about something you lost that you'll never get back.
- e. Write about a time when you knew you'd done the right thing.
- f. Write about something you don't remember.
- g. Write about your darkest teacher.
- h. Write about a memory of a physical injury.
- i. Write about when you knew it was over.
- j. Write about being loved.
- k. Write about what you were really thinking. Write about how you found your way back. Write about the kindness of strangers. Write about why you could not do it.
- l. Write about why you did.(404)

62. ANDREW ZIMMERN: FINDING THE RIGHT RECIPE FOR THE KITCHEN OR LIFE: LOOK FOR DETAILS AND DOERS.

63. NAVAL RAVIKANT:

- a. **The first rule of handling conflict is don't hang around people who are constantly engaging in conflict. . . .** All of the value in life, including in relationships, comes from compound interest. People who regularly fight with others will eventually fight with you. I'm not interested in anything that's unsustainable or even hard to sustain, including difficult relationships."
- b. **THE FIVE CHIMPS THEORY:**
 - i. "There's a theory that I call 'the five chimps theory.' In zoology, you can predict the mood and behavior patterns of any chimp by which five chimps they hang

out with the most. Choose your five chimps carefully.”

- c. “I find that 90% of thoughts that I have are fear-based. The other 10% are probably desire-based. There’s a great definition I read that says, ‘Enlightenment is the space between your thoughts,’ which means that enlightenment isn’t this thing you achieve after 30 years sitting in a corner on a mountaintop. It’s something you can achieve moment to moment, and you can be a certain percentage enlightened every single day.”

d. NAVAL’S LAWS:

- i. The below is Naval’s response to the question “Are there any quotes you live by or think of often?” These are gold. Take the time necessary to digest them.
 - 1. “These aren’t all quotes from others. Many are maxims that I’ve carved for myself.”
 - 2. Be present above all else.
 - 3. Desire is suffering (Buddha).
 - 4. Anger is a hot coal that you hold in your hand while waiting to throw it at someone else (Buddhist saying).
 - 5. If you can’t see yourself working with someone for life, don’t work with them for a day. Reading (learning) is the ultimate meta-skill and can be traded for anything else.
 - 6. All the real benefits in life come from compound interest.
 - 7. Earn with your mind, not your time.
 - 8. 99% of all effort is wasted.
 - 9. Total honesty at all times. It’s almost always possible to be honest and positive.
 - 10. Praise specifically, criticize generally (Warren Buffett).

11. Truth is that which has predictive power.
12. Watch every thought. (Always ask, “Why am I having this thought?”)
13. All greatness comes from suffering.
14. Love is given, not received.
15. Enlightenment is the space between your thoughts (Eckhart Tolle).
16. Mathematics is the language of nature.
17. Every moment has to be complete in and of itself.

e. Tweets:

- i. “What you choose to work on, and who you choose to work with, are far more important than how hard you work.”
 - ii. “Free education is abundant, all over the Internet. It’s the desire to learn that’s scarce.”
 - iii. “If you eat, invest, and think according to what the ‘news’ advocates, you’ll end up nutritionally, financially, and morally bankrupt.”
 - iv. “We waste our time with short-term thinking and busywork. Warren Buffett spends a year deciding and a day acting. That act lasts decades.”
 - v. “The guns aren’t new. The violence isn’t new. The connected cameras are new, and that changes everything.”
 - vi. “You get paid for being right first, and to be first, you can’t wait for consensus.”
 - vii. “My one repeated learning in life: ‘There are no adults.’ Everyone’s making it up as they go along. Figure it out yourself, and do it.”
 - viii. “A busy mind accelerates the passage of subjective time.”
- f. Naval argues against seeking immortality by highlighting humanity's insignificance in the vast universe. He describes

life as fleeting—a brief blink in the immense scale of time and space. Civilizations, like the Sumerians or Mayans, are barely remembered, emphasizing the transient nature of existence. For those who don't believe in an afterlife, he suggests that life's short, precious duration makes it vital to avoid prolonged unhappiness. With only a finite time to live, he stresses the importance of finding joy and meaning rather than dwelling in misery.

64. SAM KASS:

- a. The first is: Never serve anything you wouldn't want to eat. Never serve crap. It's Rule Number 1. You can have a high standard on everything. Rule Number 2: When things get really busy, instead of just plowing ahead, trying to work as fast as you can, and just going through all the tickets, he always would tell me, 'Step back and come up with a plan. Look at what dishes you have, and figure out the most efficient way to cook them.' So, if you have five of one thing, don't just cook them one at a time. Get them out, prep them together, and do them together."

65. EDWARD NORTON:

- a. **YOU WANT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY? THEN TAKE THINGS SERIOUSLY**

66. STEPHEN J. DUBNER:

- a. "so our brainstorming was: Let's come up with as many ideas as possible, and then put them under scrutiny, and basically try to kill them off, and if they were unkillable, then we'd keep going with them."

67. JOSH WAITZKIN:

- a. Oh, I think the little things are the big things. Because they're a reflection. This may sound clichéd, but how you do anything is how you do everything."
- b. **JOSH:** "It's such a beautiful and critical principle, and most people think they can wait around for the big moments to turn it on. But if you don't cultivate 'turning it on' as a way of life in the little moments—and there are hundreds of times more little moments than big—then there's no chance in the big moments. . . . I believe that when you're not cultivating quality, you're essentially cultivating sloppiness." (444)

68. BRENE BROWN:

- a. And if you're going to live in the arena, the only guarantee is you will get your ass kicked. . . . Daring greatly is being vulnerable. So when you ask yourself, 'Did I dare greatly today?' The big question I ask is, 'When I had the opportunity, did I choose courage over comfort?'
- b. People always [think] you gain trust first and then you're vulnerable with people. But the truth is, you can't really earn trust over time with people without being somewhat vulnerable [first]."
- c. Who do you think of when you hear the word "successful"? "I don't picture anybody. I picture the word 'redefine.' The word 'successful' or 'success' has been such a dangerous word in my research. My answer is: Be clear that your ladder is leaning against the right building."

69. Reality is largely negotiable. If you stress-test the boundaries and experiment with the “impossibles,” you’ll quickly discover that most limitations are a fragile collection of socially reinforced rules you can choose to break at any time.

70. JAMIE FOXX:

- a. “When you raise your kids, you’re the bow, they’re the arrow, and you just try to aim them in the best direction that you can, and hopefully your aim isn’t too off. That’s what [my grandmother] did for me.”
- b. “People are nervous for no reason, because no one’s gonna come out and slap you or beat you up. . . . When we talk about fear or a lack of being aggressive [holding someone back], it’s in your head. Not everybody is going to be super aggressive, but the one thing that you can deal with is a person’s fears. If you start early, if they are a shy person, they won’t be as shy if you keep instilling those things.”
- c. TF: Look at whatever you’re afraid of and ask, “What is on the other side of fear, if I push through this?” The answer is generally nothing. There are few or no negative consequences, or they’re temporary. This touches upon Francis Ford Coppola’s lesson that we’ll explore later: Failure is not durable.

71. BRYAN JOHNSON:

- a. “That is interesting . . .” and I would open my pitch book and walk them through the industry. Here are the providers, here is what they do, here is how they do it, here is what I do. I am the same as everyone else, except with me, you get honesty and transparency and great customer support. So, I became this company’s number-one sales person. I broke all their sales records following this really simple formula of just selling honesty and transparency in a broken industry.

72. BRIAN KOPPELMAN:

- a. “Is that a dream or a goal?” If it isn’t on the calendar, it isn’t real.